

Every so often, and recently more frequent, a company implements an idea in a particular industry so different and appealing for the consumer that it revolutionizes the industry itself.

Wal-Mart, for example, achieved this for the general merchandise stores. There was much consternation and hand-wringing when the local "mom and pop" general stores went out of business, yet the the consumer was satisfied and overall the economy benefitted in the long run. Local communities now celebrate when a Wal-Mart or Super Wal-Mart will open in there town.

Now we are faced with a revolution in the radio industry. A new technology is being extremely well received by the consumer. The consumer wants more, and the two predominant companies in the industry are prepared to deliver. Yet, there is much consternation and hand-wringing over what might happen to the local broadcast networks if advertising money is lost. If this happens, however, we must remember that the reason is because the consumer has made his/her choice and is simply placing her money elsewhere. The economy evolves and continues to grow. Regulation of this evolution is not in the best interest of the consumer, nor the economy as a whole.

Please remember that AM radio was the most modern radio technology at one point until FM radio, with its better quality product, was able to dominate the industry and acquire advertising money. Now, the shoe is on the other foot for FM radio. Stifling this natural evolution helps no one except those companies that refuse to evolve with new technnnologies. I urge you to reject NAB's petition 04-160 and similarly reject any other attempts to stifle or limit a consumer's choice for a newer, quality product.